to cover around 1000 retail outlets in the country under its automation programme during the current year *i.e.* 2006-07.

The automation system being provided at retail outlets is expected to facilitate better monitoring of the stocks, receipts and sales from the automated retail outlets, apart from other features like computerized billing etc. The system is expected to ensure efficient stock reconciliation on day-to-day basis thereby reducing the chances of unintended product being unloaded in the tanks at these retail outlets.

(b) While the possibility of adulteration of petrol/diesel by some unscrupulous elements cannot be ruled out due to huge price difference between petrol/diesel and various adulterants available in the market and the easy miscibility of these products with petrol/diesel, the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have taken a number of measures to contain adulteration.

(c) Alongwith the automation of Retail Outlets, IOC is also implementing Sealed Parcel Delivery System whereby tankers (TTs) carrying product from supply locations to retail outlets will be provided with electronic locks, which are capable of storing the data of all the opening and closing instances of the locks. This data will be captured at supply location and retail outlets. This will facilitate in identifying any unauthorized instances of opening and closing of the electronic locks midway and therefore, will greatly reduce the possibility of adulteration during transportation.

Promotion of higher use of ethanol

806. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to promote addition of a large percentage of ethanol in petrol to substantially reduce retail market prices of petrol in view of the facts that bio fuel like ethanol is suitable for use as petrol-mix by motor vehicles and that ethanol's production price is a fraction of petrol's retail price;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) With a view to reducing dependence on imported oil by way of encouraging use of

indigenous sources of energy and to provide a supportive role to the sugarcane farmers, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoP&NG) had introduced the scheme of mandatorily supplying 5% ethanol blended petrol in major sugar producing States and Contiguous Union Territories *w.e.f.* 1.1.2003. However, the programme could be implemented only in a staggered manner because ethanol was not available in a consistent manner and at reasonable prices. MoP&NG issued an amending Notification dated 27.10.2004 making sale of EBP mandatory in 10 States and 3 UTs if he price of sourcing indigenous ethanol for supply of ethanol-blended petrol is comparable to the price of indigenous ethanol for alternative uses; the delivery price of ethanol at the locations is comparable to the import parity price of petrol at that location; and the indigenous ethanol industry is able to maintain uninterrupted supply of ethanol for ethanol-blended petrol programme at such prices. as regards procurement price of ethanol, the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have been procuring ethanol through public tenders. While the delivered price of petrol and ethanol at mixing depots would vary from location to location and from time to time, it is not correct to state that ethanol price may be a fraction of petrol price. In fact that availability of ethanol at reasonable prices has been one of the constraints in smooth implementation of the programme so far.

Financial performance of oil companies

807. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the profit earned or losses incurred by the Oil and Natural Gas companies under administrative control of the Ministry from 2001-02 to 2005-06, company-wise;

(b) the amount of duties/taxes paid to Government by the companies for the last five years from 2001-02 to 2005-06;

(c) the increase in profits as percentage to previous year and increase profits in rupees for all the five years; and

(d) the rate of return on the capital employed and earning per share for all the five years in each of these companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) The profit earned or losses incurred by the Oil and Natural Gas companies under